

Garage Sale Gal

Do's & Don'ts for Early Birds!

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Lynda Hammond

Do's and don'ts for early bird garage salers

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When Chris Lundry has a garage sale, he hopes buyers don't come early.

"It's a violation of my privacy," he says. "I think it's really obnoxious."

Chris is talking about early birds, people who arrive at his sale hoping to get a jump on the feverish competition.

The Tempe resident has had only a few garage sales but learned a lesson while holding his first sale in Seattle in 1992. He was planning to open at 8, which he noted in ads and fliers. But he couldn't believe it when people started knocking on the door at 6, rousing him from a comfortable sleep.

"I told them to go away and come back later. I was tempted to tell them not to come back at all."

Chris, 38, just isn't a morning person. He likes to stay up late and sleep in - even on garage-sale days. So, now when Chris has a sale, he emphasizes on his notices "no early birds."

Chris isn't alone. I see ads all the time specifying the same thing.

But it's always piqued my interest.

You see, I *am* a morning person. So, I say come one, come all and come early! Why? Well, I want to sell the stuff I've

dusted off, the items I've taken the time to haul out to the driveway and the things I've painstakingly organized on tables. And opening early is good on the pocketbook. I get my best crowds between 6 and 8 and make the most money in those first two hours. That's because die-hard garage salers are out early. They're looking for specific items and they want to make sure they get them. I'm an early bird on days when I'm out buying, too. There've been plenty of times when I've arrived at a sale bright-eyed and bushy-tailed only to find out something I wanted was already sold. Even early birds can miss a good deal. Garage sales are so popular in the Valley we just can't get started early enough whether we're buying or selling.

So, in my opinion, if you want to make the most money possible on garage-sale day: Open early!

But Chris isn't budging. Come on, Chris, just one day of the year, can't you get up two hours earlier?

"To be honest, when we sell stuff, it's not because we need the money it's just to get rid of it. And if it's still there at the end of the day, we give it to charity," he says

Early bird do's and don'ts

Use restraint: If the ad says "no early birds," be respectful. It may be tough, especially if the seller has something you really want. But, hey, if we anger the seller, we may not get it anyway!

Ask first: If you pull up to a sale and the seller is still setting up shop, simply ask if you can browse. Usually, they'll encourage you to, but it's always polite to ask first.

If you have it, they will come: There's one thing sellers can count on: early birds. We'll still show up despite your best efforts to keep us out. So, plan on that. Advertise your sale for 8 knowing folks will start showing up at 7.



Photo courtesy: Meg Watjen

Chris Lundry (left) sells a "singing skeleton (center) to his friend, Aaron Moorvert, for \$5 at his recent sale in Tempe. Chris, who's not crazy about early birds at his sales says buyers showed up a half hour before starting time. "I didn't mind that much this time. I was out there setting up so I just let them look."

MY FAVORITE FIND

Do you have a garage sale find you love? Something that makes you smile when you look at it? Share it with us. Send us your picture. Include your name, email address and phone number and email it to:

Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Watch for the story of *your* treasure in this column!

Lynda Hammond is a former television anchor who left the anchor desk for the love of garage sales. Contact her at Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Lynda also does garage sale segments on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona.